

March 20, 2015

RE: **SUPPORT for SB 361 (increases penalties for animal cruelty) with the addition of language that would prevent gestation crates from being used in CT**

Additionally, **OPPOSE HB 6034** (Sunday hunting), and **SUPPORT HB 5707** ("Beagle Freedom Bill", outdoor sheltering for dogs).

Dear Co-Chair Kennedy, Co-Chair Albis, and Honorable Members of the Environment Committee:

Please accept my testimony in **SUPPORT SB 361 with the addition of language that would prevent gestation crates from being used in Connecticut**. To be clear, I am requesting a ban on gestation crates, not a livestock advisory council (or any other type of diversionary nonsense).

I **strongly support** increasing the penalties for malicious and intentional animal cruelty, and I ask that you **add language to SB 361 that would prevent gestation crates from coming to Connecticut**. The intensive confinement of farm animals is already here in Connecticut – chickens confined in tiny cages at KofKoff Egg Farms in eastern CT -- and I don't want to see further expansion of these types of cruel farming practices. Indeed, the use of gestation crates is nothing less than torture. The legislative proposal is simple: Amend the cruelty statutes (Title 53, Chapter 945) in order to "prohibit confinement of sows during gestation in a manner that prevents them from turning around freely, lying down, standing up, or fully extending their limbs." Please use language as provided in the 2015 testimony from The Humane Society of the United States' Connecticut State Director Annie Hornish.

Nine states (included our New England neighbors Rhode Island and Maine) and the European Union have passed legislation to outlaw gestation crates. Smithfield Foods, the nation's largest pig producer, and Cargill have already announced that they will end the confinement of sows in gestation crates in their company-owned facilities. Major corporations such as Nestle, McDonald's, Burger King, Wendy's, and more than 70 others have announced that they will end gestation crate use in their supply chains.

Please, do not allow Connecticut to become the state that attracts pork mega-factories simply because we are among the last and few that still allow this horrific practice to exist. Really, is that who we want to be?

Additionally, I **OPPOSE Sunday hunting (HB 6034)**, because I want my one day of peace in the woods and because bow hunting is inhumane (high crippling rate), and I **SUPPORT HB 5707**, which would provide adoption opportunities for dogs and cats used in certain experiments and which would define outdoor sheltering standards for dogs.

I am among the 91% of Connecticut voters who want a ban on gestation crates, and I will be following this matter, as well as HB 6034 and HB 5707, very closely. It is my sincere hope that you will listen to the wishes of those who voted you into office and, by doing so, will **SUPPORT SB 361 with the addition of language that would prevent gestation crates from being used in Connecticut!**

Sincerely,

Katie Haggerty